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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHSA](#) [SENV](#) [ID](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: WORLD OCEAN CONFERENCE -- RAISING ISRAELI
PARTICIPATION

Classified By: Ambassador Cameron R. Hume, reasons 1.4(b+d).

[¶1.](#) (C) SUMMARY: Mission has learned that Indonesia does not plan to invite Israeli representatives to the World Ocean Conference (WOC) it will host, May 11-15. We have noted that a failure to invite Israeli participants could undermine the WOC's claim to be a world conference. We also urged GOI official not to politicize a conference devoted to science and the environment. Taking our points on board, Indonesian interlocutors have suggested that non-governmental Israeli participation might be possible. END SUMMARY

NO PLANS TO INVITE ISRAEL

[¶2.](#) (C) Israel is not among the 131 states and international organizations the Indonesian Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) plans to invite to the May 11-15 ministerial-level World Oceans Conference (WOC). (Note: The goal of the WOC is to win political commitments from governments to address the role of oceans and climate change. The WOC will culminate in the signing of the Manado Ocean Declaration and the formal launch of the Coral Triangle Initiative by the six CTI heads of state.)

REVIEWING MATTER WITH GOI

[¶3.](#) (C) Poloffs raised this matter with officials at DEPLU's American and Middle East Affairs Directorates. We noted that failure to invite Israeli participants could undermine the WOC's claim to be a world conference. We also urged Indonesian officials not to politicize a conference devoted to environmental protection and scientific exploration.

[¶4.](#) (C) DEPLU interlocutors took note of our points and promised to look into the matter. They noted that Indonesia did not have diplomatic relations with Israel, a fact that would complicate possible Israeli participation.

UNOFFICIAL REPRESENTATION POSSIBLE

[¶5.](#) (S/NF) Poloff also raised the matter with Yahya Asagaf, an advisor on Middle East issues to Indonesian State Intelligence Agency (BIN) Chief Syamsir Siregar. (Note: BIN remains the primary channel for GOI contact with Israeli officials.) Asagaf said the GOI would likely refuse to invite any Israeli government officials to the WOC. Inviting Israel could become a sensitive political issue with Muslim groups, something the government is keen to avoid during an election year.

[¶6.](#) (C) Indonesia would likely welcome non-governmental Israeli participants to the WOC, according to Asagaf. He said that attendance by Israeli academics or scientists would not raise the political sensitivities triggered by Israeli government participation. Asagaf suggested that joint participation by Israeli and Palestinian ocean experts would be even less controversial in Indonesia.

